telligence and Statistics who compile and publish import statistics including those for import of steel.

(b) The attainment of self-sufficiency in steel will depend upon the rate of growth of indigenous production and demand. Efforts are being made to attain self-sufficiency during the course of the Eighth Plan period. Some varieties of special steel are, however, likely to continue to be imported.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal with Government at present for conversion of Salem Steel Mills to a composite graded steel manufacturing unit.

Interlinking of Country's Major Rivers

718. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have appointed a Committee or an experts team to make a study of the possibilities of interlinking major rivers of the country to form the nucleus of the National water grid;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof: and

(c) if not, whether Government undertake to explore the possibilities of interlinking major rivers?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) to (c) A national perspective for water resources development has been formulated by the Government for transfer of surplus waters to deficit areas by linking of rivers, and studies with regard to its nepinsular component have been taken up by the National Water Development Agency set up by the Government of India.

Sunflowr cultivation

719. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken by Government to increase the acreage of the cultivation of sunflower;

(b) what is the proportion of sunflower oil to the total oil (edible) production in the country; and

(c) whether government propose to introduce special incentives and subsidies for sunflower cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) For increasing the area under Sunflower cultivation in the country, inter-cropping, sequential cropping of Sunflower and its introduction to new areas have been taken up under the National Oilseeds Development Project. The project provides financial assistance for input supply and input services and demonstrations in order to induce the farmers to take up Sunflower cultivation on a large scale.

(b) Percentage of Sunflower oil to total edible oil is about 3.5 per cent.

(c) In addition to the National Oilseeds Development Project which provides 50% Central assistance for oilseeds including Sunflower, a new project "Oilseeds Production Thrust Project" has been sanctioned for kharif 1987 with 100% Central assistance for seed production Plan protection measures, seed minikits distribution, demonstrations etc. of Oilseeds including Sunflower particularly in non-traditional areas.

Drip Irrigation Subsidy

720. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have proposals to subsidise the cost of initial introduction of drip irrigation by small and marginal farmers; and